

House Bill 1290

Testimony: Carma Hanson, Safe Kids Grand Forks

Thursday – January 21, 2021

Chairman Ruby and members of the House Transportation Committee, my name is Carma Hanson and I am the Coordinator of Safe Kids Grand Forks, an injury prevention coalition that is based out of Altru Health System. Our mission is to reduce the number of preventable injuries and deaths to children under the age of 19. Our coalition is heavily involved in injury prevention activities as it relates to biking and other wheeled sports.

As you can imagine part of our education to children and the public is this; “when a car meets a kid/person, the car ‘wins’ every time, even if the cyclist had the right-of-way”. When cars and vehicles navigate on the same roadways, and they both have the right to do so, cars are at a huge safety advantage due to their size, speed and safety features afforded them that bicycles don’t have. For many, cycling is their primary mode of transportation, not just in the summer months but during the winter as well. In recent years, the popularity of cycling has increased and we see more and more people using this mode of transportation to get to school, college classes, work and recreational locations. It is important that we have rules of the road that protects all road users.

House Bill 1290 seeks to do just that. Now, I am not naïve to think that officers will be writing tickets should this potential law be violated, but what this will do is to create a law that would be part of driver’s education, making all vehicle users aware of the need for this safety strategy. As you can see from the map on the next page (taken from the National Conference of State Legislatures – 4.28.2020), most US states have passed a law regarding safe passing distance for vehicles when a cyclist is present. In an effort to protect all road users that equally have the rights to our roadways, I would encourage a DO PASS on this bill.

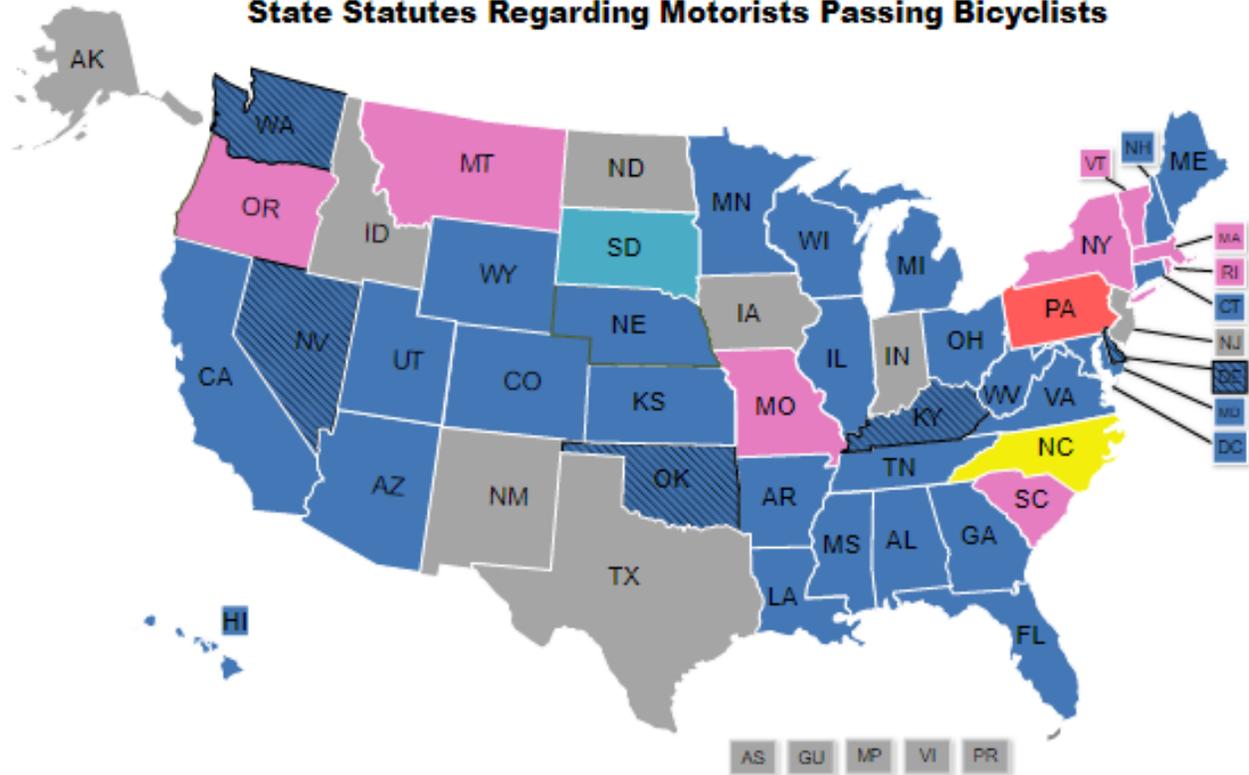
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State Statutes Regarding Motorists Passing Bicyclists



LEGEND	
	States with 2-foot passing law/4 feet in a no-pass zone
	States with 3-foot minimum passing distance
	States with 4-foot minimum passing distance
	States with general "safe distance" passing requirements
	States with no specific law for passing a bicyclist
	States with 3-feet when below 35 PH/6-feet for above 35 MPH
	States that require a motorist to completely change lanes when passing a bicyclist if there is more than one lane proceeding in the same direction.

